



# NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND and UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND

## FACT SHEET

DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, HEADQUARTERS, NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND & U.S.  
NORTHERN COMMAND, 250 VANDENBERG, STE B016,  
PETERSON AFB, CO 80914-3808 PHONE: (719) 554-6889 DSN: 692-6889

---

### NORAD since Sept. 11, 2001

Following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the North American Aerospace Defense Command implemented changes, improvements and enhancements to its mission and resources to face a new range of threats. Configured to meet outside threats such as a Soviet bomber or missile attack, NORAD had to change to meet a new threat that could appear without warning within the U.S. and Canadian borders.



### MISSION

Immediately following the Sept. 11 attacks, the Department of Defense established Operation NOBLE EAGLE to defend against similar terrorist attacks using hijacked or private civilian aircraft. Since Sept. 11, 2001, NORAD has responded to more than 3,500 possible air threats and intercepted more than 1,400 aircraft in the U.S. and Canada.

### RESOURCES

In order to meet potential airborne threats within the United States and Canada, NORAD was allocated more resources.

- NORAD increased the number of fighters standing alert throughout the U.S. and Canada, adding more interceptor capability to the inventory.

- Before Sept. 11, 2001, the primary threat was considered an attack by bombers from across the Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean and the Arctic and alert sites were selected to handle this threat. After Sept. 11, 2001, Air Control Alert locations were added to meet possible terrorist attacks throughout the U.S. and Canada.
- More airborne refueling capability was added for fighters in order to sustain a longer airborne response.
- Airborne Warning and Control Systems were added, giving NORAD a quick response radar capability.
- Ground-based air defense systems were placed around locations considered vital to government and civilian infrastructure such as Washington, D.C.

## **COORDINATION**

Given the sensitivities and short response time needed to counter an airborne threat, processes and means of coordination with military and civilian agencies were streamlined to allow NORAD to respond quickly, precisely and with the correct measures to a potential threat.

- Conference calls were established among key military and civilian decision-makers to ensure better communication during an emergency.
- The NORAD rules of engagement were revised to make clear who has the authority and responsibility to respond to an airborne threat with the appropriate response.
- The Domestic Event Network was expanded to allow NORAD to monitor important Federal Aviation Administration activity. Although set up as the FAA's "operations loop" between the FAA, centers, approach control and towers, the NORAD sectors, regions and command and control center can monitor the DEN and speak on it if necessary.
- NORAD integrated FAA radar and radio coverage, providing more coverage within North America for NORAD and the Department of Homeland Security.
- NORAD established routine coordination with the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Aviation Administration, Transportation Security Administration, the United States Secret Service and Canada Command to more easily coordinate with agencies involved in responding to a threat.

Current as of 7 Sept., 2011